

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJ: NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENTARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE PROPOSES

US VISIT

SUMMARY: NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AUTHORITIES HAVE
ASKED FOR EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING VISIT OF
STORTING (PARLIAMENT) STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENSE TO THE US
FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK DURING LATTER PART OF
JUNE THIS YEAR. GROUP WOULD HAVE DISCUSSIONS AND
BRIEFINGS IN WASHINGTON, DC, AND VISIT SELECTED USG
DEFENSE FACILITIES AND OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST IN TEXAS
AND CALIFORNIA AND VISIT UN IN NEW YORK. COMMITTEE
CONSISTS OF 10 PARLIAMENTARIANS AND IS CLEARLY ONE OF
NORWAY'S MOST IMPORTANT AND INFLUENTIAL DEFENSE BODIES.
COMMITTEE LAST VISITED US THREE YEARS AGO. OCCURRING AT A
TIME OF DECISION FOR MANY ASPECTS OF NORWEGIAN SECURITY
POLICY, EMBASSY BELIEVES VISIT BY COMMITTEE WOULD BE
MOST USEFUL AND WISHES TO ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST TO EXTENT
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POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY.

1. AS PART OF ITS PROGRAM TO INFORM AND UPDATE ITSELF ON CURRENT DEFENSE MATTERS, THE STORTING DEFENSE COMMITTEE IS PLANNING TO VISIT CANADA AND US BEGINNING JUNE 17. COMMITTEE WILL OPEN VISIT IN CANADA(CANADIAN PORTION OF EARLIER VISIT WAS ABBREVIATED) AND CANADIAN AUTHORITIES ARE NOW PREPARING NINE-DAY ITINERARY FOR COMMITTEE.

2. FOLLOWING STAY IN CANADA, COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO SPEND SEVEN DAYS IN US. DEPENDING ON WHERE THEY LEAVE CANADA--A MATTER TO BE DECIDED IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS-- GROUP VOICED INTEREST IN SPENDING SEVERAL DAYS IN WASHINGTON, DC FOR TALKS WITH OFFICIALS OF DEFENSE AND STATE AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. GENERALLY THEY WOULD APPRECIATE BRIEFINGS ON AND DISCUSSIONS OF FULL RANGE OF DEFENSE ISSUES, IN COURSE OF WHICH PROBLEMS OF NATO'S NORTHERN FLANK AND QUESTIONS OF PROTECTING OFFSHORE OIL INSTALLATIONS WOULD BE CONSIDERED.

3. THREE YEARS AGO COMMITTEE MEMBERS MET WITH THEN DEPUTY SECRETARY RUSH AND JOINT CHIEFS CHAIRMAN ADMIRAL MOORE AT DEFENSE; WITH ASST. SECRETARY HILLENBRAND AND OTHERS AT STATE; SACLANT IN NORFOLK; NORTHROP CORP IN LOS ANGELES; ALEMEDA AFB IN SAN FRANCISCO; AND NORAD HQ IN COLORADO SPRINGS.

4. THIS YEAR THEY SUGGEST VISITS OUTSIDE WASHINGTON TO (1) EITHER GENERAL DYNAMICS PLANT IN FORT WORTH OR NORTHROP FACILITIES NEAR LOS ANGELES(NORWAY, OF COURSE, HAS NOT MADE FINAL DECISION ON REPLACEMENT FIGHTER AIRCRAFT PURCHASE); (2) EL PASO TO SEE THE ROCKET TEST RANGE (PRESUMABLY NORWEGIANS ARE INTERESTED IN BOTH FT. BLISS AND WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE IN NEW MEXICO) WHERE US HAS BEEN EVALUATING THE ROLAND II SHORAD SYSTEM; (3) ALEMEDA AFB, CALIF. WHERE ORION P-3 AIRCRAFT ARE BASED. (4) EDWARDS AFB FIGHTER TESTING RANGE; AND IF POSSIBLE (5) THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK.

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5. DELEGATION WILL BE HEADED BY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PER SYSSING-DAHL (CONSERVATIVE PARTY) AND CONSIST OF NINE OTHER MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE SECRETARY MATHIAS SOLVBERG AS WELL AS THREE MEMBERS OF DEFENSE MINISTRY, INCLUDING MINISTRY COUNSELLOR AREN JOKSTAD, WHO WILL HANDLE TRIP ARRANGEMENTS. ONE OFFICIAL FROM NORWEGIAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON WILL ALSO TRAVEL WITH GROUP. IF POSSIBLE, COMMITTEE MEMBERS WOULD LIKE SPOUSES TO

ACCOMPANY THEM, BRINGING THE GROUP FROM 15 TO TOTAL OF 25 PERSONS. SPOUSE PARTICIPATION WILL DEPEND UPON COST OF TRAVEL, AND GROUP HAS ASKED CANADIAN TO ARRANGE TRANS-ATLANTIC TRAVEL ON CANADIAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT FROM GERMANY.

6. IF CANADIAN TRANSPORTATION IS NOT AVAILABLE, GROUP OF 15 WILL TRAVEL COMMERCIAL. JOKSTAD HAS INQUIRED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR GROUP TO TRAVEL ANY PORTION OF US TRIP, OR TRANS-ATLANTIC TRIP, BY US MILITARY MEANS. EMBASSY AGREED TO PASS ON REQUEST.

7. EMBASSY CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO STARTING DEFENSE COMMITTEE AND TO IMPRESSION COMMITTEE RECEIVES WHILE IN US. WITHIN CONTEXT OF US BUDGETARY AND PERSONNEL CONSTRAINTS, WE RECOMMEND THAT USG PLACE MILITARY AIRCRAFT AND ESCORT OFFICER AT DISPOSAL OF COMMITTEE AND OTHERWISE ACCORD COMMITTEE FULL VIP TREATMENT FOR SEVEN DAY PERIOD.

8. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAS ASKED USG REACTION TO PROPOSED TRIP AND WOULD WELCOME ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING SUGGESTIONS. FINAL DECISION ON ALL ASPECTS OF TRIP EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN TWO WEEKS FOLLOWING FIRMING UP OF CANADIAN PORTION. NORWEGIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TENTATIVELY PLANNING TO MAKE TRAVEL AND HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS. BYRNE

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